



News Release

USDA Forest Service
Cibola National Forest and Grasslands
Mountainair Ranger District
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For Immediate Release

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Mountainair Ranger District to Continue Prescribed Burn near Red Canyon

Mountainair, NM – February 14, 2014. The Cibola National Forest and Grasslands' Mountainair Ranger District is planning to resume the prescribed burn that was started in the Manzano Mountains, west of the community of Manzano. The 253 Prescribed Burn located on Forest Road 253 and began in 2013. Fire managers are planning to finish the final 77 acres of the total 250 acres. Firefighters plan to re-enter this area and resume burning the week of February 17, weather and personnel permitting. Fire managers on the district will be closely watching weather patterns and fuel moistures to determine the best time to implement this burn. If ignited, fire management crews will monitor the burn for as long as necessary. If conditions are right and the 253 burn accomplishes its objectives, managers will look at the possibility of conducting another burn near Forest Road #275 (Beanfield area).

The goal of this project is to improve watershed and wildlife biodiversity, and to help protect private property in the event of a wildfire. This ecosystem depends on fire to promote new vegetation, enhance habitat and reduce the threat of large fire. It also improves public and firefighter safety by reducing the accumulated fuels that could otherwise contribute to more intense fire behavior under hotter/drier conditions.

During the prescribed burn, NFS roads will remain closed to the public due to winter closures. In addition, temporary road signs warning about smoke and activity on the roads will be posted on State Highways 131 and 55. Smoke may be noticeable throughout any of the local mountain communities including the Estancia Valley and the west side of the Manzano Mountains. Smoke could travel as far north as State Highways 217 and 337 in the Tijeras area. Fire fighters will make every attempt to burn during times of the day when ventilation is greatest. Additional fire vehicles will be in the area patrolling and monitoring the roads. Please drive carefully when on these roads, as visibility might be lowered due to smoke.

If you have questions regarding the planned prescribed burn or any other Mountainair Ranger District questions, please call 505.847.2990 or e-mail Adrian Padilla at adrianpadilla@fs.fed.us or Arlene Perea at atperea@fs.fed.us.

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